

# Virginia Department of Historic Resources

## PIF Resource Information Sheet

This information sheet is designed to provide the Virginia Department of Historic Resources with the necessary data to be able to evaluate the significance of the proposed district for possible listing in the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places. This is not a formal nomination, but a necessary step in determining whether or not the district could be considered eligible for listing. Please take the time to fill in as many fields as possible. A greater number of completed fields will result in a more timely and accurate assessment. Staff assistance is available to answer any questions you have in regards to this form.

<b>General Property Information</b>		For Staff Use Only DHR ID #: 122-5796	
District Name(s): <u>Sussex-at-Norfolk Apartments Historic District</u>			
District or Selected Building Date(s): <u>1947-48</u>		<input type="checkbox"/> Circa <input type="checkbox"/> Pre <input type="checkbox"/> Post            Open to the Public? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	
Main District Streets and/or Routes: <u>Grantham Road, Birmingham Ave, Timothy Ave, Restmere Road, Doris Drive</u>		City: <u>Norfolk</u> Zip: <u>23505</u>	
County or Ind. City: <u>Norfolk</u>		USGS Quad(s): <u>Norfolk North</u>	

<b>Physical Character of General Surroundings</b>	
Acreage: <u>19</u> Setting (choose one): <input type="checkbox"/> City <input type="checkbox"/> Urban <input type="checkbox"/> Town <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Suburban <input type="checkbox"/> Rural <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation Corridor	
Site Description Notes/Notable Landscape Features/Streetscapes: The district is bounded by Grantham Road to the south, Doris Drive to the west, Restmere Road to the east, and Terminal Blvd. and a Norfolk Southern railroad line to the north. The entire site slopes very gently to the north with extensive grass and established oak trees as well as some asphalt parking areas. Two streets transect the site and divide it into roughly thirds: Birmingham Ave to the south and Timothy Ave to the north. The complex is surrounded by single family residential to the west, south, and east with the southeast section bordering a small garden apartment complex called Sewells Park Apartments. One block to the south, parallel to Grantham Road, is West Little Creek Road, a major thoroughfare in this section of Norfolk. The north end of the complex borders a narrow wooded area which serves as a buffer with the railroad line and the heavily traversed Terminal Blvd.	
Ownership Categories: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Public-Local <input type="checkbox"/> Public-State <input type="checkbox"/> Public-Federal	

<b>General District Information</b>	
What were the historical uses of the resources within the proposed district? Examples include: Dwelling, Store, Barn, etc... <u>Multi-family dwellings; laundry facilities</u>	
What are the current uses? (if other than the historical use) _____	
Architectural styles or elements of buildings within the proposed district:	<u>Colonial Revival</u>
Architects, builders, or original owners of buildings within the proposed district:	<u>Paul M Jeffrey and Jacob H. Brody: owners and builders; Eugene Tucker Carlton: architect</u>
Are there any known threats to this district? <u>Deterioration</u>	

**General Description of District:** (Please describe building patterns, types, features, and the general architectural quality of the proposed district. Include prominent materials and noteworthy building details within the district and a general setting and/or streetscape description.)

The Sussex –at-Norfolk Apartments were constructed 1948-49 at the northern end of Norfolk on a large parcel just south of Norfolk Naval Base. The complex, consisting of groupings of two-story brick apartment buildings, was designed by Richmond architect E. Tucker Carlton. There are 77 contributing apartment buildings attached in 27 groups, three contributing laundry buildings, and one noncontributing maintenance butler building. There are four apartment units per building, for a total of 308 units, including one and two-bedroom types featuring the historic floor plans, many with front and rear entrances. The units retain historic hardwood floors, some historic features and trim, but have modern double-hung one-over-one windows. Kitchens and bathrooms have been updated. The Colonial Revival buildings were designed with alternating offset facades featuring varying entry types and brick styles, some painted and some unpainted. All are rectangular with side gable roofs. The attached buildings are further grouped to form large open green spaces including lawns, sidewalks, and mature oak trees. The complex consists of three large parcels divided by two streets. This was the largest peacetime development in Norfolk up until this point and features more green space than any other still extent historic garden apartment complex.

The district is bounded by Grantham Road to the south, Doris Drive to the west, Restmere Road to the east, and Terminal Blvd. and a Norfolk Southern railroad line to the north. The entire site slopes very gently to the north with extensive grass and established oak trees as well as some asphalt parking areas. Two streets transect the site and divide it into roughly thirds: Birmingham Ave to the south and Timothy Ave to the north. The complex is surrounded by single family residential to the west, south, and east with the southeast section bordering a small garden apartment complex called Sewells Park Apartments. The houses to the west were built in 1947 by the same developer as the Sussex complex. One block to the south, parallel to Grantham Road, is West Little Creek Road, a major east-west thoroughfare in this section of Norfolk. The north end of the complex borders a narrow wooded area which serves as a buffer with the railroad line and the heavily traversed Terminal Blvd. The apartment buildings face outwards towards the streets with the rear of the buildings facing large interior green spaces. Substantial parking is also provided by the streets bordering and bisecting the complex. Concrete sidewalks run along the exterior verge as well as between the buildings within the complex.

The groupings of buildings are staggered and placed in irregular patterns to create a sense of a more natural interior green space as compared to many complexes with buildings spread out in regimented patterns. The amount of green space featured is also greater than other existing historic garden style apartment complexes and the layout, with the buildings pushed to the perimeter, results in large very large open spaces. Some courtyards are in the interior of each block and some face the streets. The facades of the buildings are landscaped with mature shrubs while large crepe myrtles line the verge along the streets. Large trees, mostly oaks, highlight the interior green spaces. There is an historic brick laundry building within each block and there is a metal butler building for maintenance in the second block of the complex.

The 77 apartment buildings were all built utilizing cinder block masonry construction faced with seven course American bond brick, but feature several decorative façade variations. Façades include recessed and flush doorways. Porch designs include single-bay, one-story with a front gable pedimented roof; three-bay two-story portico with a front gable pedimented roof; uncovered single-bay stoop; rear entrances usually feature single-bay stoops with a shed roof and painted galvanized metal tube railings. The brick facades vary between painted and unpainted and feature one of the following decorative elements: single header brick belt course forming a minimal cornice above the second story windows; a soldier course forming a simple second story cornice; header brick belt courses in horizontal rows running from the ground to the roofline on the two side bays of some buildings. Facades also feature a variety of three window types: single narrow one-over-one double-hung sash; single standard width one-over-one double-hung sash; paired standard width one-over-one double-hung sash. The buildings also feature poured concrete basements.

The interior of each building features a small vestibule with left and right doors to each first floor unit and stairs leading up to the two second floor units. The units all have a kitchen, bathroom, dining room and then either one or two bedrooms. The historic radiator heat has been replaced by modern HVAC systems for each unit.

**Significance Statement:** Briefly note any significant events, personages, and/or families associated with the proposed district. It is not necessary to attach lengthy articles or genealogies to this form. Please list all sources of information. Normally, only information contained on this form is forwarded to the State Review Board.

Sussex-at-Norfolk was one of many garden style complexes built in Norfolk from the late-1930s until the late-1940s and the end of the severe post-WWII housing shortage. The complex was designed by architect Eugene Tucker Carlton (1900-1975) who was registered in Richmond from 1940 to 1953 and designed several apartments there including the Willa Apartments (FHA: 1946) and the Old-Colony Apartments (FHA: 1948). The Sussex project was permitted on February 16, 1948 for a total projected cost of \$1,145,000 and the builder was Jacob H. Brody. The project faced Sewalls Point Road, now Grantham Road, on eighteen acres adjacent to the old Norfolk Golf Course. It was linked to an adjoining housing project by the same development team of Sussex at Norfolk Corporation, headed by Paul M. Jeffrey. The rentals were handled by the well known local firm S.L. Nusbaum & Co. Before developing this project, Jeffrey and Brody completed several projects during the war period including Hilton Village in Hampton, Westminster Homes in Chesterfield Heights, and Windsor Homes in Portsmouth.

Like many other Norfolk apartment complexes from this period, Sussex was built with Federal Housing Administration guaranteed funding. There were at least twenty FHA projects between 1942 and 1950, with at least six of those during the post-war period. More than other Virginia cities such as Richmond and Arlington, the demand for multi-family housing in Norfolk was supported by the number of soldiers leaving the service and entering civilian life. This demand was coupled with the national post-war trend of many working and middle class people moving to urban areas for employment. Sussex is the largest still existing garden style complex remaining from this era both in the number of units as well as the amount of green space. Sussex-at-Norfolk is eligible at the local level under Criterion A (Social History) as an example of FHA funded post-war garden style housing which was intended to serve the significant need for middle-and-low income multi-family housing. It is also eligible at the local level under Criterion C (Community Planning and Development) as the largest and one of the best remaining examples of garden apartment planning featuring a large landscaped setting, unparalleled in size, with interior green space, walkways, and parking. Finally, Sussex-at-Norfolk is eligible at the local level under Criterion C (Architecture) for its intact site and the presence of all of its historic buildings which feature strong architectural integrity with good examples of a variety of Colonial Revival features.

More than Richmond, Norfolk embraced the garden style apartment type with more than a dozen large examples constructed within a decade to accommodate the huge influx of population during and after WWII. In 1940 Norfolk had an approximate population of 140,000 but that had increased to 200,000 by 1943 in addition to 168,000 military personnel at the peak of the local war effort in December of 1943. Most of these apartment complexes were funded with FHA guaranteed loans.

The garden apartment concept focused on a higher quality of life for residents by providing well designed living spaces but in a format which allowed developers to maintain profits with numerous multi-unit buildings. The design focused on large interior green spaces and courtyards with walkways which provided an attractive and enjoyable recreational and living space for the residents. Practical concerns such as central laundry facilities and dedicated parking sites were also addressed. Buildings were generally two-to-three stories and were grouped in such a fashion as to maximize open space. Apartments were also designed so that they had views of the interior green spaces. The complexes were also provided with landscape designs including trees, shrubs, and gardens.

All but one of Norfolk's extant garden apartments are located within a few miles of each other off of Granby Street and West Little Creek Road. All but two of these were FHA projects. Several large garden apartments have been demolished over the years including Bolling Square Apartments (300 units), Lafayette Shores Apartments (644 units) and Suburban Park Apartments (209 units) as well as numerous smaller examples. Only ten large garden style WWII era apartments remain in Norfolk.

The earliest garden apartment complex constructed in Norfolk was the Larchmont Village Apartments located at 5500-5511 Alson Dr., 1110-1142 Bolling Ave., 1031-1049 Buckingham St. and 5500-5514 Monroe Pl. This group of apartments was built in 1938 at a cost of \$830,000 and included 172 units in thirty two-story buildings with a total of 628 rooms. The owner was Larchmont Village, Inc., the architect was Raymond C. Snow (Washington DC) and the builder (and part owner) was A. Lloyd Goode Contracting Co. out of Charlotte, NC. This complex was unique in several ways. It was located in the Larchmont neighborhood which is a completely different area from all of the other garden apartments constructed during this period. This resulted in fierce opposition from the neighborhood residents which almost ended the project. Also, the design and decorative details of these apartments are of a higher quality than any other complex to reflect the adjacent wealthy single family neighborhood. The buildings are traditional Colonial Revival style and grouped to create large green spaces.

Oakdale Homes Apartments (FHA), located at 7601 Lankford Ave. and 120-128 W. Little Creek Rd. were built in 1942 at a total cost of \$240,000 and included 160 units in twenty buildings. The owner was Oakdale Homes, Inc. (James Rosati- President (New York) and the builder was Witten Construction Co. Now called Sterling Oaks, this complex has less green space than some other examples and features a mixture of frame and brick Colonial Revival style buildings.

Daniels Gardens Apartments located at 7311-7423 E. Kenmore Dr. were built 1942-43 at a total cost of \$260,000 and included 172 units in a series of two-story four-plexes. The owner was Daniels Gardens, Inc. (New York) and the builder was Moore Operating Corp. Now called Archers Green, this complex features brick Colonial Revival buildings with considerably less green space and much of the internal courtyards taken up by parking lots.

Sewells Park Apartments (FHA), located at 408 W. Little Creek Rd., Newport Ave., Restmere Rd. and Sheryl Dr. were built 1942-43 at a total cost of \$532,000 and included 224 units in 28 buildings. The owner was Sewells Park, Inc. (Alvin Bibbs Wolosoff (NY) – President), the builder (and part owner) was Sewells Construction Co. This complex also has less green space than some other apartments and features predominantly Colonial Revival style brick buildings with some frame sections; there are some International Style elements.

Talbot Park Apartments (FHA), located at Warren, Marcy and Ralph Streets, was built 1942-43 for a total cost of \$627,000 and included 296 Units and 33 buildings of varying sizes including eight, sixteen, and twenty units. The owner was Talbot Park Apartments (James Rosati, President), the architect was Bernard B. Spigel, and the builder was Harvard Housing Corp. This is a traditional Colonial Revival complex with a mixture of gable and flat roofed buildings. It is the second largest extant garden style complex but with far less green space than Sussex.

Bondale Apartments (FHA), located at 7603, 7609-7625, 7614-76724 Bondale Ave., 207-225 Bradford Ave., 206-214 Sewells Point Rd. (now W. Little Creek Rd.) and 297-217 Sterling St., was built 1943-44 for a total cost of \$750,000 and included seventeen buildings with varying sizes including eight, twelve, and sixteen units. The owner was the Bondale Corp. (Bertram “Bert” F. Bonner- President) the architect was Bernard B. Spigel, and the builder was Bonner Construction Co. This has an average amount of green space and features a mixture of Colonial Revival and International style buildings.

Meadowbrook Gardens Apartments (FHA), located at Major Ave., Meads Rd. and W. Little Creek Rd. were built 1947-48 at a cost of \$1,000,000 and included 100 Units. The owner was Meadowbrook Gardens (Edwin T. Holland- President), the architect was Bernard B. Spigel, and the builder was Huhleman & Kayoe- Contractors (Richmond). Now called Parkwood Manor, this complex has all International style buildings but with decidedly less green space.

Riverpoint Apartments (FHA), located at Newport Ave., were

built 1947-48 at a cost of \$435,000 and included 220 units within eighteen buildings. The owner was Riverpoint Apartments Corp. (Baltimore) (Ben Cohen- President), the architects were Lublin, McGaughy & Associates and the builder was The Housing Engineering Co. These apartments are the most like the Sussex complex with buildings grouped together to allow for larger green spaces. The buildings vary significantly in size and are Colonial Revival style with some gabled and some flat roofed examples.

Riverside Terrace Apartments (FHA), located at Newport Ave. and Warren St. were built 1947-48 at a cost of \$2,000,000 and included 232 Units spread across 17 buildings. The owners were Riverside, Inc. and the Chester Corp. (W. Taylor Johnson- President) and the architect was Bernard B. Spigel. This complex has the largest buildings which are in the International Style and surround an average amount of green space.

Sussex-at-Norfolk garden apartments represents the largest remaining example of its type in Norfolk in both the number of units and the substantial amount of green space. The integrity of the site and the buildings, along with the overall historical context make it a notable local example of this type of development which served armed forces members and working class citizens beginning in the WWII era and up until the present day.

## Works Cited

Lewis, Al. T. "War Housing," *Know: Norfolk at War*, Vol. VI-No. 1, Norfolk: Norfolk Advertising Board, Inc., August 1943.

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National Register Nomination, Multiple Property Document, "Federal Housing Administration-Insured Garden Apartments in Richmond, Virginia, 1942-1950," Virginia Department of Historic Resources Archives File 127-6191, Richmond.

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Parramore, Thomas C, Peter C. Stewart, Tommy L. Bogger. Norfolk: The First Four Centuries. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1995.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps

Schlegel, Marvin W. Conscripted City: The Story of Norfolk in World War II. Norfolk: Norfolk War History Commission, 1951.

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Wells, John E. and Robert E. Dalton. The Virginia Architects: 1835-1955. Richmond: New South Architectural Press, 1997.

**Sponsor** (Individual and/or organization, with contact information. For more than one sponsor, please use a separate sheet.)

Mr. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mrs. <input type="checkbox"/>	Genesis Properties Inc	
	(Name)	
101 West Commerce Road, 2nd Floor		Richmond
(Address)		(City)
ronaldhhunt@yahoo.com		
	(Email Address)	

In the event of organization sponsorship, you must provide the name and title of the appropriate contact person.

Contact person: Ronald H. Hunt

Daytime Telephone: (804) 230-1220 x13

**Applicant Information** (Individual completing form)

Mr. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mrs. <input type="checkbox"/>	Marcus R Pollard		Commonwealth Preservation	
Ms. <input type="checkbox"/> Miss <input type="checkbox"/>			Group	
	(Name)		(Firm)	
PO Box 11083	Norfolk	VA	23517	
(Address)	(City)	(State)	(Zip Code)	
marcus@commonwealthpreservationgroup.com		757-651-0494		
(Email Address)		(Daytime telephone including area code)		

Applicant's Signature:

Date:

**Notification**

In some circumstances, it may be necessary for DHR to confer with or notify local officials of proposed listings of properties within their jurisdiction. In the following space, please provide the contact information for the local County Administrator or City Manager.

Mr. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mrs. <input type="checkbox"/> Dr. <input type="checkbox"/>	Marcus D Jones		City Manager	
Miss <input type="checkbox"/> Ms. <input type="checkbox"/> Hon. <input type="checkbox"/>				
	(Name)		(Position)	
City of Norfolk	1101 City Hall Building, 810 Union Street			
(Locality)	(Address)			
Norfolk	VA	23510	757-664-4242	
(City)	(State)	(Zip Code)	(Daytime telephone including area code)	

Please use the following space to explain why you are seeking an evaluation of this district.

**The owner is interested in placing the property on the National Register of Historic Places.**

Would you be interested in the State and/or the Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credits? Yes ☒ No ☐

Would you be interested in the easement program? Yes ☒ No ☐